



Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20554

03-123
CCB

MAY 10 2005

Control No. 0500904-DRO

The Honorable John Warner
United States Senator
4900 World Trade Center
101 West Main Street
Norfolk, VA 23510-1690

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JUN 08 2005

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Senator Warner:

Thank you for your letter of April 19, 2005, to the Federal Communications Commission (Commission or FCC), on behalf of your constituent, Mr. Mukanda M. Kayembe, expressing his concerns regarding Video Relay Service (VRS), a form of telecommunications relay service (TRS). Your correspondence was forwarded to the Commission's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau for handling.

Mr. Kayembe's letter states that he wants to see continued improvement in the provision of VRS, to make sure VRS is always free for deaf consumers, and that he suffers long delays before reaching a VRS interpreter.

The Commission has always been, and continues to be, supportive of the provision of VRS. In a Report and Order (FCC 00-56) released on March 6, 2000, the FCC declared that VRS is a form of TRS and stated that, on an interim basis, the costs of all calls - both intrastate and interstate - would be reimbursed from the Interstate TRS Fund. This funding regime remains in place, and all VRS calls, many of which are long distance, are free to VRS users.

With regard to Mr. Kayembe's statement that he waits a long time before reaching a VRS interpreter, there is currently no speed of answer requirement for VRS mandating how quickly a VRS provider must answer an incoming VRS call. The Commission waived the application of its traditional speed of answer rule for VRS to allow providers to gain experience in their ability to handle VRS call traffic. However, this issue was raised in a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) the Commission released on June 30, 2004 (FCC 04-137). The Commission sought further comment on the speed of answer issue in a Public Notice released on February 8, 2005 (DA 05-339). The speed of answer issue for VRS will be addressed in a future order.

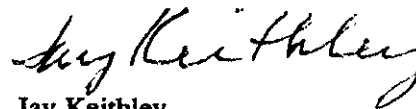
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We encourage Mr. Kayembe to actively participate in proceedings before the Commission to ensure that his opinions are expressed and considered fully. The Commission has available an e-mail service designed to apprise consumers about developments at the Commission, to disseminate consumer information materials prepared by the Commission to a wide audience, and to invite comments from other parties on Commission regulatory proposals. This free service enables consumers to subscribe to and receive FCC fact sheets, consumer brochures and alerts, and public notices, among other consumer information. To subscribe, Mr. Kayembe should send an e-mail to subscribe@info.fcc.gov and, in either the subject line or the message insert: "subscribe fcc-consumer-info first name last name" (e.g., "subscribe fcc-consumer-info John Doe").

The Commission also invites Mr. Kayembe to visit the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau's Internet web site at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb> or the Commission's Home Page located at <http://www.fcc.gov>.

A copy of Mr. Kayembe's correspondence has been placed in the public record for this proceeding. The Commission appreciates your inquiry. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



Jay Keithley
Deputy Bureau Chief
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau

JOHN WARNER
VIRGINIA

COMMITTEES
ARMED SERVICES, CHAIRMAN
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

United States Senate

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April 19, 2005

Ms. Diane Atkinson
Congressional Liaison Specialist
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Room 8-C453
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Atkinson:

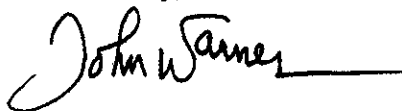
Enclosed is a letter from Mr. Mukanda M. Kayembe of Hampton, Virginia. As detailed in his correspondence, Mr. Kayembe is seeking information about the Videophone Relay Service.

I will appreciate your review and consideration, consistent with the rules and regulations of the Agency, of the enclosed correspondence. I look forward to any action you may take which will enable me to respond to Mr. Kayembe's concerns. Please direct your reply to my Norfolk, Virginia Office.

As always, I am grateful for your assistance and cooperation.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,



John Warner

JW/scs
enclosure

CEB
Policy
Dist.
904

Mukanda Michael Kayembe
29 Phelps circle
Hampton, VA 23663

Senator John Warner
4900 World Trade Center
Norfolk, Virginia 23510

Dear Senator John Warner,

Hi, I would like to ask you to help me about the problems with Videophone Relay Service (VRS). I want all people to be able to use VRS so both Deaf and Hearing people can talk to each other with VRS interpreters anywhere. We, Americans, should teach about VRS to other countries so everyone can improve and use VRS.

I would like to make sure that VRS will be always free for any deaf people and their families. There are some problems with VRS now and I have a copy of a letter I wrote to Federal Communications Commission (FCC). I would like for you to read it and make sure that it is equal for any people. I came from South Africa and I understand how Deaf people feel about America because Americans have many good things like closed-captioning, and relay services. I wish every Deaf people in the world use American Sign Language and it will make communication easier for everyone.

I hope you will help me. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,


Mike Kayembe

Mukanda Michael Kayembe
29 Phelps circle Hampton,
VA 23663

April 5, 2005

Federal Communication Consumer
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, consumer complaints
445 12th Street, SW,
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear FCC:

Hello...

I don't like the VRS because I cannot plan time before I can talk to the VRS interpreter as I have to wait a long time. Or, sometimes the pictures on the screen are frozen and I can't sign anything. I cannot talk comfortable because some VRS interpreters cant see me and said I look so dark and black. I was stuck as I can't find more lightings to make it brighter to see. I think videophone needs more powerful lightings so it will be better and will not be a problem, simply.

I want to make a goal for the VRS to be more advanced in skill better than last year. And I want the VRS to improve so that the VRS can be used through internet all over the world so I can call other family, and friends. I wish VRS can do that soon because it will help me and many other people to talk and have fun or have meeting and discuss important things. We all can share many good ideas in ASL VRS and deaf people can compromise and make a contract to improve better VRS.

Thank you!



Mike Kayembe

CC: Senator George Allen
Senator John Warner
House of Representative Robert C. "Bobby" Scott